

ADDITIONAL WRITING TOPICS

Argument and Persuasion

1. Write a persuasive essay in which you express a deeply felt opinion. In it, address a particular person or audience. For instance, you might direct your essay

To a friend unwilling to attend a ballet performance (or a wrestling match) with you on the grounds that such an event is a waste of time

To a teacher who asserts that more term papers, and longer ones, are necessary for students to master academic writing

To a state trooper who intends to give you a ticket for speeding

To a male employer skeptical of hiring women

To a developer who plans to tear down a historic house

To someone who sees no purpose in studying a foreign language

To a high-school class whose members don't want to go to college

To an older generation skeptical of the value of "all that noise" (meaning current popular music)

To an atheist who asserts that religion just distracts us from the here and now

To the members of a library board who want to ban a certain book

2. Write a letter to your campus newspaper, or to a city newspaper, in which you argue for or against a certain cause or view. You may wish to object to a particular feature, column, or editorial in the paper. Send your letter and see if it is published.
3. Write a short letter to your congressional or state representative, arguing in favor of (or against) the passage of some pending legislation. See a news magazine or a newspaper for a worthwhile bill to write about. Or else write in favor of some continuing cause: for instance, requiring (or not requiring) cars to reduce exhaust emissions, reducing (or increasing) military spending, providing (or reducing) aid to the arts, expanding (or reducing) government loans to college students.
4. Write an essay arguing that something you feel strongly about should be changed, removed, abolished, enforced, repeated, revised, reinstated, or reconsidered. Be sure to propose some plan for carrying out whatever suggestions you make. Possible topics, listed to start you thinking, are these:

Gun laws

Low-income housing

Graduation requirements

The mandatory retirement age

ROTC programs in schools and colleges

Movie ratings (G, PG, PG-13, R, NC-17, X)

School prayer

Fraternities and sororities

Dress codes in primary and secondary schools

TV advertising